

## Police Aim to Save Lives with "Booze It & Lose It"

Due to the increase in drunk-driving-related fatalities around the holidays each year, state and local law enforcement agencies



across North Carolina were out in full force for the holiday Booze It & Lose It campaign. The statewide campaign lasted from December 11, 2015 through Jan. 3.

Their efforts resulted in 3,074 DWI charges in which 252 were drug-related charges and 2,822 were alcohol related.

Nearly 350 law enforcement agencies participated in the campaign, issuing 105,020 traffic and criminal citations in addition to the 2,822 DWI charges at 10,914 checking stations and saturation patrols across the state.

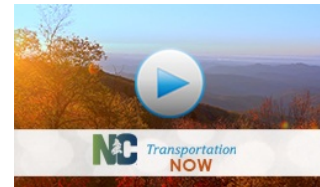
The top five counties for DWI arrests during the campaign were as follows:

- Wake County - 260;
- Guilford County - 208;
- Mecklenburg County - 168;
- Cumberland County - 136; and
- Forsyth County - 125.

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## NCDMV Updates Come to the Mountains

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## 2016 Local Projects: What's Ahead?

Residents in Division 11 will see some significant projects moving forward in 2016, including two major improvements that will get underway.



**NCDMV updates, like the ones at this office, are working to improve customer service and reduce wait times at DMV offices.**

NCDMV offices have undergone equipment installation and updates around the state. Local offices in Division 11 counties that have already updated their facilities include:

- Alleghany (Sparta, Nov. 17);
- Ashe (Jefferson, Nov. 16);
- Avery (Newland, Nov. 18);
- Caldwell (Hudson, Nov. 19),
- Surry (Elkin, Dec. 8; Mount Airy Dec. 9);
- Wilkes (Wilkesboro, Dec. 7);
- Watauga (Boone, Nov 18) and
- Yadkin (Yadkinville, Dec. 10) counties.

New cameras, scanners, printers and, for the first time, credit card machines are now in 114 driver license offices across North Carolina to provide faster driver license and ID card applications.

"NCDMV is making all DMV functions faster and much easier for citizens," said Division of Motor Vehicles Commissioner Kelly J. Thomas. "Governor McCrory is focused on making more DMV services available online and decreasing wait times in offices. We are 'Driving Change' at DMV."

Customers are reminded to call the their local offices to confirm appointments and operating hours.

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## **Board Approves Transportation Projects' Acceleration**

Last week, members of the North Carolina Board of Transportation approved the amended project schedules of many transportation projects across the state. Late last year, Governor Pat McCrory announced that the final leg of the eastern section of the Winston-Salem Northern Beltway, the Asheville Connector, the Weddington Road/I-485 interchange and the Mid-Currituck bridge are among the numerous projects that will be accelerated thanks to the reforms of the 2015-17 budget the governor signed into law.

Construction is set to begin this spring on more sections of the \$144 million [U.S. 221 widening project](#), which calls for improvements and widening in some locations of more than 16 miles of highway between U.S. 421 in Deep Gap and N.C. 88 in Jefferson.

The work beginning this year will involve about three miles in Watauga and Ashe counties between U.S. 421 in Deep Gap, which gets a new interchange, and Idlewild Road, as well as nearly two miles in Ashe County between Idlewild Road and the south fork of the New River.

In November, a contract will be awarded for another section of the U.S. 221 project in Ashe County that will complete the four-lane work on the highway between U.S. 421 and West Jefferson.

Work is also set to begin this year for the widening of N.C. 268 in Wilkes County to improve traffic flow in the area.

Yet another project will move forward in July when a contract is scheduled for awarding for the Sparta Bypass in Alleghany County. It will complete the loop on the south side of U.S. 21.

Local Division 11 projects also are being accelerated and additional projects can be found [here](#).

"The reforms I signed into law will get these roads built sooner," Governor McCrory said. "The primary purpose of the reforms was to ensure transportation funds were being spent on transportation projects and not diverted to other state programs."

The budget reforms signed by Governor McCrory added over \$700 million in new funding for transportation over two years and ended the annual transfer of \$216 million from the Highway Fund to the General Fund. Over 10 years, these budget reforms are projected to provide an additional \$1.6 billion for North Carolina Department of Transportation construction projects.

"These budget reforms, coupled with our 25-Year Vision and the new transportation funding formula that emphasizes congestion relief, safety and job-creation will make North Carolina more competitive and prepared for future economic growth," Governor McCrory said.

Significant new and accelerated highway projects made possible by the additional revenue include:

- Funding all four sections of the final leg of the eastern section of the Winston-Salem Northern Beltway, which is also part of the Future Interstate 74 corridor (only segment A had been funded). The interchange at U.S. 52 also is funded;
- Accelerating by three years the Weddington Road/I-485 interchange in Mecklenburg County;
- Accelerating by one year into the first five years of the STIP Segment B of the Asheville Connector; and
- Accelerating by two years the Mid-Currituck Bridge, a toll bridge in Currituck County.

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